

Q.823

G887

1619f



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Alternates

<https://archive.org/details/antienttrueadmir00bocc>

THE
ANTIENT

True, and Admirable History

of
Patient GRISEL,

A Poore Mans Daughter in France:

Shewing

How Maides, by her example, in their good
behaviour may marrie rich
HUSBANDS;

AND

Likewise, Wiues by their patience and obedience
may gaine much Glorie.

Written first in French.

AND

Therefore to French I speake and give direction
For English Dames will live in no subiection.

But, now Translated into English.

AND

Therefore say not so. For, English maids and wiues
Surpasse the French, in goodnesse of their lines.



AT LONDON,

Printed by H. L. for William Lutter, and are to be sold at his
shop in Bedlem, neere Moore-Fields.

1616.

28
6.34.f. 47

1
2
3
4
5

0144560 C3444

Lib. 111a

R. 111a

823
G 887
1619f

1044322



THE
 Historie of patient GRISEL, made
Marchionesse of Salus. In which is
 exemplified the true obedience, and
noble behaviour of vertuous women
towards their Husbands.

CHAP. I.

How the Marquesse of Salus passed the time of his youth with-
 out any desire of mariage, till he was requested by the faire
 entreatie of a favorite, and other Gentlemen, to affect a wife;
 both for the good of the Country, and the honour of him-
 selfe: with his answer to the same.

Betweene the Fountaines of Italy and France, to-
 wards the South, lyes the territory of Salus, a
 Country flourishing with excellent Townes and
 Castles, and peopled with the best sort of Civ-
 tiles and Peasants: amongst whom there lived
 not long since a Nobleman, of great hope and expectation,
 Lord of the Cuntry, by name, Gualter, Marquesse of Sa-
 lus: to whom, as the government a pertained by right of in-
 heritance; so their obedience attended, by desert of his wor-
 thinesse. He was young in yeeres, noble of lineage, and such
 attractive demeanour, that the best thought it a pleasure to be
 commanded by him, and the worst grew more tractable by his
 good example: his delight was in hunting and halwing, and
 the pleasure of the time present ertinguished the care of the
 time to come; for he thought not of mariage, nor to intangle
 himselfe with the inconueniences of a wife, till at last the peo-
 ple

23
 87
 19f

1
 2
 3
 4
 5

014H560 C.34



ple and Noblemen of his Country protested the contrary, as discontented to see him indisposed that way, and presaging a kind of prosperity to themselves, if by his marriage posteritie might arise to assure them the better, how they might bestow their obedience hereafter. Whereupon, they assembled together, and made one day amongst the rest a determiner of their resolutions, choosing out for their speaker a Noble Knight, of great authority, faire demeanour, eloquent speech, and more inward with the Marquesse then any of the rest: who, thus acquainted with all their mindes, and prepared to utter his owne minde, tooke an opportunity to acquaint the renowned Marquesse with the matter.

Most Honourable Sir, the great humanity extended toward vs, & of which I most especially haue participated, hath thus emboldened me aboue others, to make a further triall of your patience, and forbearing my rudenes: not that there is any sufficiency or singularity in me aboue others: but in that heretofore I haue found you so generous toward all, I make no question to finde you as gracious toward my selfe: and in that it hath pleased you to accept of our loue, wee are proud againe to be vnder your obedience: wherein we shall reioyce the more, if you now accord to our request the sooner, which is, to marry without delay. The time passeth, and will not be recalled: your youth intreats it, and must not be demed: your countrey importunes it, and would not bee opposed: your neighbours desire it, and hope to bee satisfied: and all sorts request it, and wish it for your honour. For when age approacheth, death attends it at the heeles, & no man can tell when, or how it will fall vpon him. Therefore wee humbly request you to accept our supplications, and accord to this importunity, that we may prouide by your appointment, a laudworthy of your honour and our subiection. In this wee are the more suppliant, because it will rebound so much to the good of your countrey, and the enlarging your renowne: for if it should so fall out (which God forbid) that you die without issue, we may lament the losse of our lord, but not redresse the complaints of the people: we shall want you that was al our

comfort, but are sure of distresse to our euermourning trouble. If then you either loue your selfe, or pity vs, frame a heart to this impression, and leaue not vs to further feare and disquiet.

When the noble lord had thus apprehended the petition of his louing subiects, he resolved to answer them as graciously as they had propounded the businesse with regard of duty, and so replied: My dearest friends, you haue urged mee to a matter, in which as yet I haue beene a mere stranger: for by nature I delight in liberty, and by custome continued my pleasures: both which must needs bee curbed by marriage, and restrained by taking a wife: notwithstanding, I cast alwaie all doubts, to pleasure you: and will thinke of no inconueniences so you be satisfied. For though marriage hath many difficulties attending: especially, the feare of legitimation in our children, and suspicion of that honour which lies on our wines honesty, yet all shall bee overcome with this resolution, that I shall please you in the same: for I am resolved, if any good come for mans contentment by marriage, it is from God: to whom I submit this cause, and pray for the good successe of your wishes, that I may liue to maintaine your peace, as well as my owne pleasure: and looke wherein my contentment shall enlarge mine honour, your welfare shall be respected as howe my life: so that (beleeue it) I will satisfie your demand, and apply my selfe to the purpose. Only one thing I request at your hands, to let me in worth my choice, and neither insult if she be a princeesse of greatnes, nor repine if she be of meane estate: but loue her because I haue loued you, and regard her how soeuer, in that she is my wife: neither being curious nor inquisitiue whom I will chuse, nor disaffected when it is past remedy.

When the company had heard him out, and found him so willing to the satisfaction, they gaue him thanks with one heart for his kinde aduision, and answered with one tongue, he should not finde them repugnant, but they would honour his wife as the princeesse of the world, and be more dangerous to him as the Commander of their soules. Thus did this new report

The History of

(like a messenger of glad tidings) fill all the Marquisate with joy, and the palace with delight; when they understood their lord would marry, and in a manner heard the time appointed: for presently it was proclaimed through the Countrey, and a day assigned for all comers to come to the Court. The Nobles prepared themselves in the best manner: the Ladies spared no cost, either for ornaments of their bodies, or setting out their beauties: the Gentles stroked to please their lord, and were braue to set out their owne greatnes: the Citizens were rich in their neatnes, and handsome in their attire: the Officers were forrall in their showes, and sumptuous in their attendants: the Countryman had his variety, and the verie Peasant his brauery; in a word, all sorts gloried in the hope of that festiuall, and euery mans expectation attended the day of the triumph. For neuer was such a preparation in Saluts before, nor such a confluence of people seene in that countrey: for besides the nouelty, many foraine Princes came to celebrate this marriage, and to shew their owne greatnes. Sauoy was neare, and sent some from her snowie hills: France as neare, and sent others from her fruitfull vines: Italy not far off, and sent many from her pleasant fields: and the Islands round about kept none at home that would come. Thus were his kinred invited, strangers admitted, his owne people entertained, and all sorts welcommed: but as yet no bride was seene, no woman named, no lady designed, no maid published, no wife knowne: onely the preparation was much, and the expectation greater.

All this while the Marquesse continued his hunting; and as he had accustomed, resorted much to a poore country village not farre from Saluts; where there dwelt as poore a countryman, named Ianicole, once woone in yeares, and ouercome with distresse. But as it happens many times, that inward graces doe moderate outward discomforts, and that God seasoneth poverty with contentment and their sufficient supportation: so had this poore man all his desires supplied in the admirable comfort of one onely daughter, so composed, as if she were determined a worke of ostentation. For such was her

patient Grisel.

beauty in appearance, and vertue in operation, that it put iudicious men to an extasie in the choise by comparison: but both vited did here grace each other; and when they pretended an action, it was all to go forward to perfection. And whereas in others this temporary blessing gaue wings to desire, to bee seene and knowne abroad; in her those innated vertues allayed the heat of all manner of passion, and breakings out of frailty. The bliauds they had were but meane; and the diet they kept was to satisfie nature: the time was over-ruled by their stomacks, and the ceremonies they vsed were thanks to God, & moderation in their repasts. The utensiles of the house were homely, yet handsome in regard of their cleanness: that bed which they had the oulde man lay in, and the quiet daunce made shift with the ground. No day passed without praise, and praises to God (for was it not praise-worthy to haue such grace in this disgrace?) nor any night, without taking account of the day passed. Her exercise was to helpe her father in the morning, and drue forth her sheep in the day time: hee was at home making of nets, and shee abroad looking to her lambs: she was neuer heard to wish for any better, but to thank God it was no worse. No word of repining euer came from her mouth, or the least grudge from her heart: at night she folded her sheep, and dressed her fathers supper: then lay they dolone to rest, and rested as well as in a bed of Dolone indeed. This was the glory of their poverty, and memory of their contentment.

But as fire will not be hid where there is matter combustible: so vertue will not be obscured where there be tongues and eares: nor could the Marquesse so hallow after his halwes and hounds, but report halloved in his eare, as fast, this wonderment; insomuch that when it was confirmed by iudicious relation, he made it not dainty to be behoulding to his owne experience. Which when he saw concurring with fame, the miracle brought a kinde of astonishment: which continuing the properties of such nouelties, increased to meditation: and so comparing the rest with this rarity, he thought her a fit woman to make his wife; supposing that if she were vertuous by na-

ture, she could not proue vicious by education : but rather as a diamond is a stone of the same value, whether set in lead or horne, it must needs bee of more excellency embellished with gold and enamell. In which resolution hee prepared his heart, and went forward with his businesse.

In the meane time the Court was daintily furnished, the plate prepared, the apparell magnificent, the coronet rich, the iewels precious, the ornaments exceeding, and all things befitting the magnificence of a prince, & the dignitie of a queen: only the Nobles wondered, the ladies were amazed, the damfels marvelled, the Gentles disputed, the people flocked, and all sorts attended to see who should possesse this wealth, and bee adozned with these robes. Till at last the nuptial day came indeed: honour prepared the sumptuousnes: fame divulged the glory: Hymen invited the guests: magnificence adozned the rooines: the Officers marshald the State: and all looked for a Bride: but who she was, the next Chapter must discover.

CHAP. II.

How after all this great preparation, the Marquesse of Salus demanded *Grissell* of her poore father *Ianicola*; and espousing her, made her Marchionesse of Salus.

When all things were extended to this glorious shew, the Marquesse (as if he went to fetch his wife indeed) took with him a great company of Earls, Lords, Knights, Squires and Gentlemen, Ladies and attendants; and went from the Palace into the Country toward *Ianicola*'s house: where the faire mayd *Grissell* knowing nothing of that which hapned, nor once dreaming of that which was to come, had made her house and selfe somewhat handsome, determining (with the rest of her neyghbor Virgins, to see this solemnity: at which instant arrived the Marquesse with all his gracious company, & next with *Grissell*, as she was carrying two pitchers of water to her poore fathers house. Of whom (calling her by her name) he asked, where her father was: she humbly answered, in the house.

Soe then said hee, and tell him I would speak with him. So the poore old man (made the poorer by this astonishment) came forth to the Lord somewhat appauled: till the Marquesse, taking him by the hand, with an extraordinary chearefulness, said, that he had a secret to impart unto him; and so sequestering him from the company, spake these words: *Ianicola*, I know, that you alwaies loued me, and am resolved, that you doe not now hate me: you haue bene glad when I haue been pleased; and will not now bee sorrowfull, if I bee satisfied: nay, I am sure, if it lie in your power, you will further my delight, and not bee a contrary to my request. For I intend to begge your daughter for my wife, and bee your sonne in lawe for your advancement. What saiest thou man: wilt thou accept mee for a friend, as I haue appointed thee for a father? The poore old man was so astonished, that he could not looke by for teares, nor speake a word for ioy: but when the extasie had end, hee thus faintly replied; My gracious Soueraigne, you are my lord, and therefore I must accoord to your will; but you are generous, and therefore I presume on your vertue: take her a Gods name, and wake mee a glad father; and let that God, which rassethe the humble and meek, make her a befitting wife, and fruitfull mother. Why then, replied the Marquesse, let vs enter your house: for I must aske her a question before you. So hee went in, the company carrying without in great astonishment: the faire maid was buied to make it as handsome as she could; and proud againe, to haue such a guest vnder her roofe; amazed at nothing, but why hee should come so accompanied, and little coniecturing of so great a blessing approaching. But at last, the Marquesse took her by the hand, and beset these speeches: To tel you this blissh becomes you, it were but a folly; and that your modesty hath graced your comelines, may proue the deceit of words, and vnbefitting my greatnes: but in a word, your father and I haue agreed to make you my wife, and I hope you will not disagree to take me to your husband. For delay shall not intangle you with suspicion, nor two daies longer protract the kindnes: onely I must bee satisfied in this, if your heart affoord a willing entertainment to the

motion and your vertue a constancy to this resolution, Not to repine at my pleasure in any thing, nor presume on contradiction, when I determine to command. For as amongst good soldiers, they must simply obey without disputing the businesse: so must vertuous wiles dutifully consent without reproofe, or the least contradiction of a brow. Therefore be advised how you answer, and I charge you take heed, that the tongue utter no more then the heart conceits. All this while was Grisel wondering at the miracle, had not religion told her, that nothing was impossible to the Commander of all things; which reduced her to a better consideration, and thus brought forth an answer:

My gracious lord, I am not ignorant of your greatnesse, and know mine owne basenesse; there is no worth in me to be your servant, therefore there can be no desert to be your wife: notwithstanding, because God will be the Author of miraculous accidents, I yield to your pleasure, and praise him for the fortune, onely this I will be bold to say, That your will shall be my delight, and death shall be more welcome vnto mee, then a word of displeasure against you.

This is sufficient, answered the great lord, and so most lovingly he took her by the hand, and brought her to the company, euen before all his peeres and great ladies; and told them, she should be his wife: so that wherein they extended their love, reuerence, and obedience toward her, he would exemplifie his regard, care, and diligence toward them. And because outward shewes doe sometimes grace besitting actions (lest her poverty and basenes might too much daunt their expectation, and seeme disgracious to their noblenes) he commanded them with a morall liuelinesse to adorne her with the richest robes they had: so that it was a pleasure to see, how the ladies bestird themselves; a delight, to behould the severall seruises performed; the many hands about her; the jewels and ornaments; the robes and wantles; the ornaments and coronets; the collars and chains; with all other particulars and accoutrements: but when she was apparolled indeed, it was a ravishment exceeding report, and they which stomached her

preferment, were now delighted with her glory. Such a benefit hath beauty by nature, and graciousnesse by nurture.

CHAP. III.

How the Marquesse and Grisel were married together.

After the ladies had thus adorned y^e Grisel with robes besitting her estate, the Marquesse and all the noble company returned to Salus, and in the Cathedral Church in sight of the people, according to the fulnesse of religious ceremonies, they were espoused together, and with great solemnitie returned to the palace. Wherein yet consisted the admiration, that no word of reproach was murmured, nor eie looked vnpleasantly vpon her: for by her wonderfull demeanour shee had gained so much of opinion, that the basenes of her birth was not thought vpon, and all her graces concurring made them verely beleue, shee was extracted of princely linage: no man once supposed, that shee could bee Grisel, daughter to pooze Ianicola; but rather some creature metamorphosed by the powers of heauen: for besides the outward statelinesse & maiesticall carriage of herselfe, the wonderfull modestie and exact symmetry of her countenance, the admirable beauty and extraordinary fauor of her visage, her faire demeanour had a kinde of attraction, and her gracious words, a sweet deliuey: so that all that came to her were glad of their accesse, and they which went from her, triumphed for their good speed: yea, report extended so far, that she was not onely visited by her owne lords and ladies with reuerence; but attended on with strangers, who came from all quarters to see her, and to be behoulding to their owne iudgements: so that if the Marquesse loued her before for her owne worth, he now reuerenced her for others respect; the rather, because he found a blessing attending her presence, and all people pleased in the contract. For when any controversie hapned betwene himselfe and his Nobles, she was so nobly minded, that what he could not obtaine by faire intreaty, she yet mitigated by sweet persuasion. When any unkinnes hapned of foraine Princes,

the biged those blessings of peace; and reasoned the matter with delightfull enforcement & when the poople were either complained of, or against, he waruelled from whence she had those pretty reasons to assuage his anger, and they verely belaued thee was sent from heauen for their release. Thus was she amiable to her lord, acceptable to her people, profitable to her Country, a mirror of her Sexe, a person prized by nature, and a wonder of the time, in which she did nothing out of time; so that the Marquesse was rather raiused then loyng, and all his subiects resolved to obedience from her good example.

CHAP. IIII.

How the Lady *Grisel* was proued by her Husband, who thus made triall of her patience.

T other blessings, in procelle of time, there was added the birth of a sweet Infant, a Daughter, that reioiced the mother, and gladded the father; the Country triumphed, and the people clapped their hands for ioy. For the Marquesse still loued her more and more, and they thought their liues not deere for her, if occasion serued. Notwithstanding all this, Fortune hath still a trick to checke the pride of life, and prosperity must be seasoned with some crosses, or else it would taint & corrupt vs too much. Whereupon, the Marquesse determined not to proue his wife, and make triall of her vertues indeed: and so taking a comenient season, after the childe was fully weaned, he one day repaired secretly to her chamber, and (seeming halfe angry) thus imparted his mind:

Although, *Grisel*, this your present Fortune hath made you forget your former estate, and that the sollicit of your life ouerthroweth the remembrance of your birth; yet, neither is it so with me, nor my Nobles: For I haue some occasion of distast, and they great cause of repining, in that they must be subiect to one so base, and haue still before their eyes our children of such low degree; so that though (for my sake) they make good semblance of the present, yet are they resolved neuer to suf-

fer any of our posterity to rule ouer them; of which, as they haue disconted with mee, I cannot chuse but forewarne you: Therefore, to preuent this discontentment betwene vs, and to maintaine that peace which must corroborate my estate, I must needs yeelde to their iudgements, and take away your Daughter from you, to preserve their amity: the thing I know must be displeasing to Nature, and a Mother cannot well indure such a losse: but there is now no remedy, only make vse of your first resolutions, and remember what you promised me at the beginning of our Contract.

The Lady hearing this sorrowfull preamble, and apprehending the Marquesse resolution, to her griefe (although euery word might haue bene as arrowes in her sides) yet admitting of the temptation, and disputing with her selfe to what end the vertues of Patience, Modesty, Forbearance, Fortitude and Magnanimity were ordained, if they had not subiects to worke upon, and objects to looke after: thus replied:

My lord, you are my Soueraigne, and all earthly pleasures and contentments of my life come from you, as the fountaine of my happinesse; and therefore please your selfe, and (believe it) it is my pleasure that you are pleased: as for the child, it is the gift of God and yours. Now he that giues may take away, and as we receiue blessings from heauen; so must we not dote on them on earth; lest by setting our minds too much upon them, we cannot set off our hearts when they are taken from vs: only one thing I desire, that you remember I am a mother; and if I burst not out into passion for her losse, it is for your sake I am no more perplexed, and so you shall euer find mee a wife besittng your desires.

When the Marquesse saw her constancy, and was in a manner pleased with her modest answer, hee replied not at all at that time. For his heart was full, and what betwene ioy and feare he departed: ioy that so great vertue had the increase of goodnesse: feare that he had presumed too farre on such a trial: but resolved in his business, hee went to put it to the aduerture.

The Marquesse sent a Varler for his daughter; but priuately disposed of her with his sister, the Dutchesse of *Bologna de grace*, who brought her vp in all things besirring the childe of so great a person.

Not long after this sad conference between the Marquesse and his lady, he called a faithfull seruant vnto him; such a one as the poet talks of, *propter fidem & taciturnitatem dilectum*, to whom he imparts this secrecy; and with seuerall instructions, what he truly meant to do with the childe, sent him to his wife with an vnfauoury message; which yet he deliuered in this manner:

I had not now come to you, most noble lady, though that power commanded me, which hath my life in subiection, if I had not more relied vpon your wisdom and vertue; than feared death it selfe. Therefore I craue pardon if I am displeasing in my message, and seeme cruell (as it were) in tearing your flesh from your sides, by bereauing you of this your daughter: for he hath appointed it that must not be gainsaid, and I am a messenger that cannot be denied: but yet with what vnwillingnes (God knows my soule.) in regard that you are so respected amongst vs, that we thinke of nothing but what may delight you, and talk not a word, but of your merit and worthinesse!

When she had heard him out; remembryng the conference the Marquesse had with her, and apprehending there was no disputing in a matter remediless, especially with a messenger, she resolved it was ordained to dy: and although she must now (as it were) commit it to a slaughter-house, whereby any wisman in the world might with good becoming haue burst out into some passion, and well enough shewed a distracted extasie; yet recollecting her spirits, and reclaiming those motiues of nature already strining in her bowels, she took the childe in her armes, and with a mothers blessing, and

sweetned kisses, the countenance somewhat sad, and the gesture without any violent expression, deliuered it vnto the fellow, not ouer amazed nor disempred, because her lord would haue it so, and she knew not how to haue it otherwise: only she said, I must, my friend, intreat one thing at your hands, that out of humanity and Christian obseruation, you leaue not the body to be deuoured of beasts or birds: for it is worthy of a graue in her innocency: and Christian buriall, though she were but my daughter alone.

The fellow hauing receiued the childe, durst not carry for feare of discovery (such impression had her words made already) but returned with it to his Maister; not leauing out the least circumstance of her answer, nor any thing might enlarge her renowne and constancy.

The Marquesse considering the great vertue of his wife, and looking on the beauty of his daughter, began to enter into a kinde of compassion, and to retract his wilfulness: but at last, resolution won the field of pity and hauing (as he thought) so well begonne, would not so soone giue ouer: but with the same secrecy he had taken her from his wife, he sent it away to his sister, the Dutchesse of *Bologna*, with presents of worth, and letters of gratification, containing in them the nature of the businesse, and the manner of her bringing vp; which she accordingly put in practice, receiuing her niece with ioy, and instructing her with diligence: so that it soone appeared, vnder what a tutelage she was, and whose daughter she might be. For her pregnancy learned whatsoeuer they taught her: and the grace she added, quickly discovered, that honour had confederated with nature to make her the offspring of such a mother.

The Marquesse, not contented with this prooffe, tooke away also her sonne, in which aduersity (with other additions) she shewed an extraordinary patience.

After this tempest was ouerpast, the rage wherof might easily haue broken the tender sides of poore Grisel. Barke (For, she verely belaued that her Daughter wasaine) the Marquesse still lay in waite for the trial of his wife, watching every opportunity which might acquaint him with her discontents; especially, if he might vnderstand whether she complained of his rigorousnesse and unkindnesse, or no: but when he not onely was aduertised of her constancy, and faire demeanour, but saw (by experience) that she was neither elated in prosperity, nor dejected in aduersity: when he perceived so great a temperature betwene the ioy of her advancement and the sorrow for her trouble, he wondered at her constancy; and the rather, because her loue and obseruation toward him continued with that sweetnes, and had such delectable passages, that his heart was set on fire againe; and he knew not how to allay the extremities of his ioy. In this manner passed foure yeeres, wherein she ouerpassed all of her kinde; and he thought it a donation from heauen to haue such a wife. At last, nature bestird herselfe againe, and made her a happy mother of a faire sonne; the ioy wherof led the whole Country into the house of praier & thanksgiving, and brought them home againe by credit-light and bonfires: so that she well perceined how acceptable she was to her people, and beloued of her husband. Notwithstanding, with the same water that dzaue the will, he drownded it; and made her still beloue the contrarie: for after two yeeres, that the childe was past the danger of a cradle, and the trouble of infancy, he took occasion once againe to inflict vpon the vertuous Grisel a new punishment; erecting his building vpon the old foundation. You knowe, saith he, what former contentions I haue had with my Nobility about our marriage, not that they can lay any im-

putation on you or your worthy behauior, but on my fortune and disastrous affection to match my selfe so meanly: wher- in yet their forward exprobration was rebated, all the while we either had no children, or that they supposed, that which we had to be taken from vs: all which ariseth out of the error of ambition (which, in a manner, is carelesse of vertue) respecting nothing but a high Progeny: so that ever since this child was borne, there hath passed many secret grudgings; and unkinde speeches against it, as if it were a disparagement to their greatnesse, to haue a lord of so meane parentage; and the Country to be subiect to the grand child of Ianicula, whom you & I, neuer since our marriage, they would admit to place of honor, or to ouertop them by way of association: nor will suffer this my Gualter, though it carry the fathers name to rule over them. Therefore, to allay the heat of these present fires, & to preserve the peace of my estate (by preventing the mischief of future troubles) I am resolved to settle my contentment, and to deale with your sonne, as I haue dealt with your daughter. And of this I thought good to aduertise you, as a preparatiue for patience, lest sorrow should distract with ouersuddenness.

Now you Ladies and Dames of these times, that stand vpon fearines of spirit and greatnesse of heart (some will haue it courage and magnanimity of minde) that are affrighted at the Character of a foole: and lilly poore soule; I speake not of Strumpets, or of such as are willing to brand themselves with the impurity of uncleannesse, and date out of impudency or running, tell their Husbands to their faces, they will goe where they list, and do what they please; but of such that vnder that impregnable target of honestie are yet so impatient at euery distemperature, that they dare answer saunt for saunt: yea like Viragos indeed offer the first blow, though a horrible confusion follow; what would you haue answered this lord? or with what fire-works would you haue made your approaches vnto him? I will not tarry for your answer, lest I pull the old house in peeces, and so though I scape the timber I may be crushed with the rubbish: but I will not

The History of

saire. **G**raime said: and if there be hope of reformation, infer it as a caution, to direct you from your naturall fiercenes. When she had heard him out: though to the griefe of her soule, she conceived the murder of her child, and that the apprehension renewed the sorrow of her daughters losse: yet would she give no way to such dissipation: that either she should have cause to suspect her patience, or that herselfe the temptation of disquiet: and therefore thus replied: **S**y lord, I have many times told you, that my soule reioiceth in nothing but in your repose: for you are the lord of me and this infant: and though I could be contented to shew my selfe a mother in his education, and bring him now and then unto you as the pledge of our loves, yet are you the commander of my loves, and I will rectifie all disordered appetites by the rule of your pleasure. Take him then a Gods name, and if he be marked for death, it is but the common hand of all creatures: nay, if the mother may be a sacrifice of propitiation to appease your disquiet, neuer was lamb so meek, nor holocaust so willing to be offered. For what may he comprehend under the titles of father, kinned children, friends, life, pleasure, honour and contentment, are all comprised under your love, and the society of a husband. Do with me then what you please: the body shall serue your turne while it lives, and the soule attend you after death.

Here was an answer to pacifie the tyrants of Sicilie, and put a man quite out of his tract of prouing such a wife: yet the Marquesse onely made vse of it to reioice in the assurance of her goodnes: and went the rather forward in his dangerous course of temptation.

CHAP.

patient Grisel.

CHAP. VII.

The Marquesse, resolute to proue his wife further, sendeth for his son, & disposeth of him as he had done of his daughter.

AS this patient and wonderfull lady was one day sporting with her infant, like an untimely tempest (spoiling the beauty of some new sowed plants) did this messenger of death interpose himselfe betweene her recreation, making the hollow demand of her some worse than the noise of a schrick owle ouer a sick mans bed: yet (as if there were a conscience in disquieting her greatness, or if you will, her goodnes) he came forward with preambles and apologies, insinuating with crawling pardon the authority of a lord, the duty of a seruant, the terror of death, the circumstance of obedience, and all other enforcements, which might either excuse a messenger, or make the message it selfe without blame. What should I enlarge a discourse of terror: it is a curtesie to conclude a mischief with quicknes: he was not so sudden in his demand, as she was ready in her dispatch: for she presently blest the child, kissed it, crossed it, adorned it, and deliuered it to the executioner: onely with the same enforcement she pleaded, as she had spoken of in the behalfe of her daughter; not to see it perish for lack of a buriall, or deuoured for want of a graue.

In this manner, and with this report he returned to his lord, who had still more cause of amazement, and lesse reason to trouble such a creature, had not his wilfulness put him forward to make an end of his business, and taught him still variety of trying this gold in the fire. But for the time, he sent likewise this child to his sister, the Duchesse of Bologna (yet some will haue her but Countesse of Paniche) who, understanding her brothers minde, brought vp both these children in such a fashion, that though no man knew whose children they were, yet they imagined whose they might be; that is, the son and daughter of some prince, or other potentate, willing to haue his children brought vp to the best purpose, and befitting their birth and honour.

CHAP. IX.

The ordering of this kinsnesse in this sort, made the Marquesse once againe settle himselfe in Salus, where he kept open house to all comers: and was proud of nothing so much, as the honour of his wife, and the love of his people: for although he had thus tried her patience and constancy, giuing her more then sufficient cause of anguish and perturbation, yet could he not finde fault, or had the least demonstration of offence, but still she loued him more and more, and was so obferuingly dutifull, and cautelous of displeasure, that many times he grew enamored of that he might command, and seemed passionate in the distractions of ouer-joy. Nor could the length of time make this love wearisome, for all they had liued thus a dozen yeares together: onely shee got the hand of him in the opinion of the people, who by this time beganne to whisper against his unkindnes, that had married so vertuous a woman, & bereaued her of two children, so that if they were true, it was a murder, if otherwise, it was unkindnesse. For though shee were poore Ianicolas daughter by birth, yet she might come from heauen for her vertue, and was sure to go thither for her piety. Notwithstanding these breakings out, which came often to the eares of his honour, such was her moderation and his government, that they only whispered the same in her behalfe, and contented themselves with the expectation of future good, as they had the fruition of present happinesse; not meddling with the same further, then in the commiseration of her, and still acknowledging their duty to him: so that although hee knew shee might this way vnderstand his former reasons of taking away her children, that it was but a deuitie, and that there were some other motiues, which procured this unkindnes: yet was hee still obstinate to exercise her patience, and conceit heat out another plot of offence on the anuill of a louing, yet most hardened heart.

CHAP.

The Marquesse, to try his Lady further, made her beleue hee would marry another wife.

Some dozen yeres were passed, since the Marquesse of Salus had sent his daughter to Bologna to his sister (as you haue heard) who was by this time growne to that beautie, comelinesse and perfection, that her fame busted all Europe; and the lady Grisel, her Mother, was made acquainted with her excellency: whereupon, he very strangely sent to Rome, by a Messenger of trust, for counterfait letters to marrie his Paragon, and to bee dispensed from his first wife. Which was so effectually dispatched, that the Messenger soone returned with the approbation of his request; and hee himselfe had many allegations in readinesse to excuse the matter, intimating the good of the Countrie, and the continuall desire of his people for the alteration; which although it was far from probability, because they pitied their ladies distresse, and rather repined against their lords inconstancy: yet it serued his turne for the time, and he thereupon created the frame of this second marriage. By this time is the faire Grisel acquainted with the businesse, and troubled at the misfortune: but hauing many times plaied the wanton with affliction, she resetled herselfe to endure wharsoeuer should be imposed: so that when she came to the prooue indeed, nothing affronted her constancy, nor humbled her louer, then her own vertue had taught her the way.

In the meane while the Marquesse had vnder hand sent to the Count of Paniche, and his sister, to bring him his children with all the pompe and glory they could prepare; with caution, not to discouer their names: and so he at a day appointed at Salus: so that it passed for currant all ouer the Countrey, that a lady, a young, braue, and gallant lady, of great lineage,

and greater worth, of high renown and mighty affinity, was comming into Saluts to be espoused to the Marquesse, and that they were already come out of Bologna de Grace, a whole dayes journey forward, with such a troope and company, that it was a shew of magnificence, and a spectacle of deloyht. For amongst the rest, there was a young lord, not fully eight yere old, whose brauery and gallantrie drew all mens eyes with admiration toward him, had not the lady diuided the gazing, and shared with their opinion. For, besides her riches and outward ornaments, her youth (as not fully thirteene) and upright comelienesse, her betaty and gracious behauiour, she was of extraordinary stature and maiestike presence.

These things thus disposed and handfomly carried, the Marquesse took an opportunity thus to speak to the disconsolate Grisel before all his people: In times past I confesse you deserued my loue, and notwithstanding the disparity betwene vs, I thought it well bestowed vpon you; nay, I cannot now impute any ill desert vnto you: notwithstanding, for some reasons to my selfe best knowne, of which I haue made the holy Father acquainted, I am resolu'd to take another wife: who, as you heare, is on the way hitherward already: therefore I would aduise you to retire to your fathers cotage; till you heare further from me.

Alas my lord, replied the swart soule, I euer disputed the matter with reason, that there was no equality betwene so great magnificence and my humillation; and in the greatest assurance of my prosperitie, reputed my selfe a bassaille & handmaid; proud of nothing but my owne readinesse to be at your command, & your willingnes to employ mee in your affaires; so that I take God to my witness, I scarce trusted my selfe with the name of a wife, when I was in the best assurance. Therefore I must acknowledge, what you haue heretofore boughsaied, as a part of great bounty, and the very fruits of your generousnes. As for returning to my poore Fathers house, I am most willing; and there as you please, like a forlorne widow wil spend the rest of my dayes: yet remember I was your wife, espoused orderly, and you haue had children by mee, so

that if I there dye, I must yet dye the widow of such a lord, and for honors sake be so reputed. As for your new spouse, God grant her many daies of comfort, and you many pecces of ioy, that you may liue in reciprocall delight one with another, and intertaine no worse contentment, then poore Grisel accustomed. As for my Dowry I brought, I brought only my selfe, and will haue no more backe againe, which was, faith, loue, reuerence, pouerty and virginity: For, as I came naked from my fathers house, I am contented to returne so againe. Your iewels are in the wardrobe, and euen the ring you married mee withal, in the Chamber: of this I weare I shall quickly be disrobed, and if there be any further misery appointed, my patience can endure it, if your pleasure suppose it; onely in recompence of my Virginie, I request a poore smocke to hide that wombe from publicke ouerlooking, that was once so priuate to so great a Prince: and because it was the bed of your Infants, let it not bee the scorne of your people; but giue mee leaue thus to goe out of the Palace, that hereafter times may wonder, how quietly a woman yielded to so great a change. Nay, let no man shed a teare, I must be more naked then so: for though the wife of a Marquesse while I liued, and the widow when I died, yet am I not too good for a graue, but in despite of pride must returne to dust and ashes.

Did I say before, they beganne to weep? I can assure you, when she had done, they roared outright; yea, the Marquesse himselfe shed so many teares, that he was faine to retire: and commanded the smock she had begged to be sent vnto her, that she might prosecute the enterpise, and he determine his businesse, as he had constantly protested.

CHAP. VIII.

How the patient *Grisel* was disrobed of her apparell, and restored all that she had (except one poore smocke) to the Marquesse.

Before I proceed any further in this wonderfull discovery, I am sure two things will bee objected against mee: first,

The History of

the impossibility of the story; secondly, the absurdity of the example. For the story I answer, that therefore it was thus published and connected together, for the rarity of the business, and the swiftness of the success; nor is it any way stranger than many Roman passages, and Grecian discourses. For the application, it is both necessary and befitting: for whereas in the condition of women, amongst many other there be two especiall errors against the modesty of their sex, and quietnes of their husbands, videlicet, superiority, and desire of liberty (I name not irregular behaviour, household inconveniences, and domesticks strife) this one example (as Hercules did the serpents) strangles them both in the cradle: and though it cannot prevent, yet will it exprobrate the fault. First concerning superiority, I hope the instances of Scripture are not made Canonically to no purpose: and out of reason and naturall enforcement, what a filthinesse is it to a generous spirit, to have a woman so presumptuous as to take an account of her husbands actions and business: wherein many times they are so peremptory, that I have seene them enter into the rooms of privacy, where secret businesses of strangers have been imparted, and were to be discussed; nor hath this been done with a lovely insinuation, or cunning excuse of longing, or willingness to be instructed, or other pretty inducements to permission, but with a high commanding voice, and impudent assurances of their owne worth: yea, I have knowne them breake open letters before they came to their husbands ouerlooking, and haue wondered even at souldiers themselves, that would giue way to such vnderency. Again, to be counterchecked in this wilfulness, what clamours haue bene raised: what tumults and discomforts occasioned: that instead of awfull obedience and delightfull affability, they haue burst out into outrageousnes, commanded teares of mischiefe, and threatned suspicious reuenges: but let them soile themselves in the filthinesse of this humour neuer so much, I say plainly, that though their husbands were swales by nature, yet is it not befitting for a wife to discouer the same, or ouer-rule in forren affaires, I meane matters which concerne them not: for there

patient Grisel.

is no great man so weake, but hath counsell and supportation of inferior Officers; nor mean man so sottish, but hath friends or seruants in the dispatch of his business. Secondly, concerning the desire of liberty; oh hellish device of the diuill, and fearefull custome both of France and England! I hope he that knowes the fashions of the East, of Muscouy, Spaine, Italy, and the Mores, vnderstands, that no married wife goes abroad but to honorable purposes; and it is an introduction to death, to salute any stranger, or be seene in priuate conference. For, in true vnderstanding, what business should any man haue with my wife three houres together in priuate: or why, without my leaue, and that vpon good grounds, should she wander in publike. I speake not to ouerthrow noble societies, generous intertainment, familiar invitations, courteous behaviour, charitable welcomes, honest recreations, or peradventure, the imparting of priuate business: but moerly against foppish wantonnesse, idle talke, suspicious meetings, damnable play-hunting, disorderly gaming, vnbefitting exercises; and in a word, all such things as tend to obfrenry and wickednes; in which (say what women can) if there be not a moderation, by nature, there must bee an enforcement by iudgement: and that woman that will not be ruled by good counsell, must be ouerruled by better example. Of which, this now in hand (of lady Grisel) is a mirror; and transparent Crysell to manifest true vertue, and wisely duty indeed, and so I come to the wonder of her obedience.

After the Marquesse was resolved to the last Act of her trial, and had sent her the shooke she demanded, amongst all the Lords, Knights, Ladies and other company, she presently disguised her selfe, and went so accompanied, from the Palace, to her fathers Cottage, who as you haue heard (for diuers reasons) was only kept from want, but neuer aduanced out of the same.

The company could not chuse but weepe and deplore the alteration of Fortune: she could not chuse but smile, that her vertue was predominant over passion: they exclaimed against the cruelty of her lord, she disclaimed the least unkind and inst

The Historie of

hāt: they wondered at so great vertue and patience. She resolved them they were exercises befitting a modest woman; they followed her with true love and desires to doe her good, shee thanked them with a true heart, and request to desist from any further deploing of her estate.

By this time they approached the house, and the poore old man Ianicola acquainted with the hurlyburly, came out to see what the matter was. And finding it was his daughter in her smocke, and in so honourable a company, bemoaning her distress, he quickly left them all onspoke unto, and ran in for those poore robes, which were formerly left in the house: with which hee quickly arrayed her, and told her before them all, that now shee was in her right element; and kissing her, had her welcom. The company was as much astonished at his moderation, as at her constancie, wondering how nature could bee so restrained from passion, and that any woman had such grace to be so gracious; in which amaze, not without some reprehension of fortune, and their Lords cruelty, they left her to the poverty of the Cell, and returned themselves to the glory of the Palace: where they recounted to the Marquesse, the strangeness of the businesse, and the manner of the accidents, and shee continued in her first moderation and indefatigable patience; the poore Father onely laughing to scorn the miseries and sodaine mutabilitie of humane condition, and comforting his daughter in her well begun courses of modesty and respectfullnesse.

Not long after, approached the Countesse of Paniche, or if you will Duchesse of Bologna, with her glorious company and beautifull lady, sending word before hand, that she would be at Salus such a day; whereupon the Marquesse sent a troope to welcome her, and prepared the Court for her intertainment: the bruit of which yet had not so squall a passage, but divers contrarious opinions thus bandied themselves; some absolutely condemned the inconstancie of the lord, others deploied the misfortune of the lady; some repined to see a man so cruell against so great worthinesse, others exemplified her praises to all eternitie; some were transported with the

patient Grisel.

gallant youth and comelinesse of this now bewtifull Virgine, others presumed to parallel the faire Grisel, but that shee had stepped a little before her in yeeres: some harped upon her great Nobilitie and high Lineage, others compared the former wifes vertue and true wisdom; some excused their lord, by the love to his Country, others excused the lady, by the nature of the aduersitie, untill the approach of the faire Virgine and the young Noble man in her company, extinguished all former conceits, and set them to a new worke, concerning this spectacle, wherein the young lady, and her brave brother had such preeminence: nor knew the Earle of Paniche himselfe or any of the company on either side, that they were his owne children by Grisel, but meerely strangers, and designed for this new marriage. So the great Marquesse made good semblance, and with his accustomed courtlinesse welcomed them all to the Palace.

The very next morning (or, if you will, the day before) he sent a Messenger for Grisel to come unto him in the very same manner as shee was, who protracted no time, but presently attended her lord: at her approach he was somewhat appalled: but yet setting (as wee say) the best foot forward, hee thus proceeded.

The lady (Grisel) with whom I must marrie, will be here to morrow by this time, and the feast is prepared accordingly; now because there is none so well acquainted with the secrets of my Palace, and disposition of my selfe as you, I would haue you, for all this base attire, addresse your wisdom to the ordering of the businesse, appointing such officers as is befitting, and disposing the rooms, according to the degrees and estate of the persons: let the lady have the priviledge of the marriage chamber, and the young lord the pleasure of the gallery, let the rest be lodged in the Courts, and the better sort upon the sides of the garden: let the viands be plentifull, and the ceremonies maintained; let the shewes be sumptuous, and the pastimes as it becommeth: in a word, let nothing be wanting, which may set forth my honour, and delight the people.

My Lord, saith she, I cannot but you, I took pleasure in nothing but your contentment, and whatsoever might con-
fess to your delight, therein consisted my joy and happiness:
therefore make no question of my diligence and duty in this,
or any other thing which is that please you to impose upon me:
and so like a poor seruante she presently addrest herselfe to
the businesse of the house: performing all things with such a
quickness and grace, that each one wondred at her goodnesse
and faire demeanour, and many murmured to see her put to
such a triall. But the day of entertainment is now come:
and when the faire lady approached, her very presence had al-
most extinguished the impression of Grisels worthinesse: for
some vnconstant humourists gaue way to the alteration, not
blaming the Marquesse for such a change. But when the stran-
gers were made acquainted with the Fortune of Grisel; and
saw her faire demeanour, they could not but esteeme her a wo-
man of great vertue and honour: being more amased at her
patience, then at the mutability of mans condition; till at last
she approached the lady, and taking her by the hand, vsed this
speech.

Lady, if it were not his pleasure, that may command to bid
you welcome, yet me thinks there is a kinde of ouer-ruling
grace from nature in you, that must exact a respect vnto you.
And as for you, young lord, I can say no more, but if I might
haue my desires satisfied in this world, they should be imploy-
ed to wish you well, and to endeavour all things for your en-
tertainment indeed. To the rest I afford what is befitting;
desiring them, that if any deficiency arate their expectation,
they would impute it either to my ignorance, or negligence:
for it is the pleasure of him, in whose will is all my pleasure,
that in all sufficiency you should haue regard and suppli-
ment. And so she conducted them to their severall chambers,
where they reposed themselves awhile, till the time of dinner
inited them to repast. When all things were prepared, and
the solemnity of placing the guests finished, the Marquesse
sent for Grisel; and rising on his seat, took her by the hand be-
fore them all, erecting his body, and elating his voice in this

manner: You see the lady is heere I meane to marry: and
the company gloriously prepared to witness the saue: are you
therefore contented that I shall thus dispose of my selfe, and
do quietly yeld to the altreation?

My lord, replied she before them all, wherein as a woman
I might be faulty, I will not now dispute: but because I am
your wife, and haue deuoted my selfe to obedience, I am re-
solved to delight in nothing but your pleasure: so that if this
match be designed for your good, and determined by your ap-
pointment, I am much satisfied, and more then much conten-
ted. And for you lady, I wish you the delights of your marri-
age, and the honour of your husband, many yeares of happi-
nesse, and the fruits of a chaste wedlock: only gracious lord,
take heed of one thing, that you trie not this new bride as you
haue done your old wife: for she is yong, and peradventure
of another straine, and so may want of that patience and go-
uernment, which I, poore I, haue endured.

Till this, he held out brasely: but nature ouercomming re-
solution, and considering with what strange variety his kin-
dnesse had passed, hee could not answer a word for teares,
and all the company stood confounded at the matter, wondring
what would be the end of the businesse, and the successe of the
extracie: But to draw them out of their doubts, the next Chape-
ter shall determine the controuersie.

CHAP. X.

The Oration of the Marquesse to his wife, and the discouery
of her children, to her great ioy, and the contentment of all
the company.

After a little redouement of his passion, and that time, and
a further meditation had disposed his senses to their perfe-
ct state, the Marquesse graciously answered:

Thou wen of women, and Champion of true vertue; I
am ashamed of my imperfections, and tyred with abusing thee.
I haue tryed thee beyond reason, and thou hast forborne me
beyond

1
2
3
4
5

MS. 60. C. 34. 17

The History of

beyond modesty : beleue it therefore, I will haue no wife but thy selfe, and when God hath thought this too good for the earth, I will (if it be not too much superstition) praye thee in heauen. Oh, tis a pleasure to be acquainted with thy worth, and to come nere thy goodnes maketh a man better then himselfe. For without controuersie, except thou hadst bene sent from above, thou couldst neuer haue acted a goddesses part be-
looue : and therefore seeing I haue bled thee so unkindly here-
tofore, I protest neuer to disquiet thee hereafter : and where-
in my cruelty extended against thee in bereauing thee of thy
children, my loue shall now make amends in restoring thy
daughter. For this my new bride is shee ; and this wanton, her
brother : thank this great lady (my sister) for their bringing
vp, and this man (you knowe him well enough) for his secre-
cy. Be not amased at the matter, I haue related a truth, and
will confirme it on my honour : only let deliue till the dinner is
done, and bid the company welcome in this poore attire : for
the sun will break through slender clouds, and vertue shine in
base array. I could much dilate the matter, but it is time to
end, lest the circumstances will neuer end. This deuice of the
Marquesses, of killing her so longly, and setting her downe
by him so discreetly, did much good. For the company had time
to dispute of the miracle, and the yong lady reason to prepare
her obedience ; which, no sooner was the dinner finished, but
shee as soone performed, nothing thought vpon but joy at the
matter, and wonder at the accident : euery one pleased to see
such a brity of goodnes ; and all delighted to haue a businesse
so well concluded. But seeing time had vnclosed a booke of
such folly, there was now no further disputing : For the la-
dies flocked about her to attend her into the chamber ; where
the yong Princess her daughter was as ready as the best to
apparell her : so that when she came amongst them againe, she
shined like the Sun after a tempest, and seemed more glorious,
because her continued modesty kept her from all insulting and
vaine glorious hauey.

Thus was the Marquesse inuolued as it were with a new
Medecine, and she continued in her outy constancy, onely ad-

patient Grisel.

mired and reuerenced for her worth, as he was esteemed and
regarded for his wisdom : the Nobles applying themselues to
renouen his estate, and the People proud they had such a Lord
to obey, especially satisfied when the poore Ianicola was ad-
uanced to his Councell, and made Gouverner of his Palace :
wherein hee behaued himselfe so well, that for ten yeares hee
still liued as he had bene bred a Courtier ; and died with the
memory of a good report. Grisel lasted thirty yeares af-
ter him : and all went to their graues in good time,
the Country renouened ouer the world for
their admirable gouernment, and
famosed for this extraordina-
ry wonder.

*Non nulla difficilis (ut ita dicam) neque passio, neque calamitas
d. nus non sufferre queat pondus hominis natura.*

Euripides Orestei.

FINIS.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 051972567